
PART I - ADMINISTRATIVE

Section 1. General administrative information

Title of project

Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Wenaha Wma Additions

BPA project number: 20112

Contract renewal date (mm/yyyy): ☐ Multiple actions?

Business name of agency, institution or organization requesting funding
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Business acronym (if appropriate) ODFW

Proposal contact person or principal investigator:

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NPPC Program Measure Number(s) which this project addresses
7.1, 7.6.A, 7.6.B, 7.6.C, 7.7, 7.8, 11.3A, 11.3D

FWS/NMFS Biological Opinion Number(s) which this project addresses

Other planning document references

1. Oregon Trust Oregon Trust Agreement Planning (OTAP) Project
 2. BPA Wildlife Mitigation Program Final EIS
 3. BPA Watershed Management Program Final EIS
 4. Assessing OTAP Project Using GAP Analysis
 5. USFS Status of the interior Columbia Basin: summary of scientific finding
 6. CTUIR Wildlife Mitigation Plan for the John Day and McNary Dams, Columbia River Basin
 7. CTWSRO Integrated Resource Management Plan
 8. ODFW District Wildlife Management Plans
 9. Wy Kan Ush Me Wa Kush Wit, CRITFC
 10. CBFWA Guidelines for Enhancement, Operations, and Maintenance for Wildlife Mitigation Projects
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Short description

Protect and restore grassland, bench, and shrub-steppe habitat values through land acquisition or easement and implementation of enhancement activities.

Target species

Bald eagle, California valley quail, mallard, western meadowlark, mink, Canada goose, spotted sandpiper, yellow warbler, downy woodpecker, California quail, Chinook salmon, bull trout.

Section 2. Sorting and evaluation**Subbasin**

Upper Columbia River Subregion, Grande Ronde Subbasin

Evaluation Process Sort

CBFWA caucus	Special evaluation process	ISRP project type
Mark one or more caucus	If your project fits either of these processes, mark one or both	Mark one or more categories
<input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish <input type="checkbox"/> Resident fish <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-year (milestone-based evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Watershed project evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed councils/model watersheds <input type="checkbox"/> Information dissemination <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operation & maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> New construction <input type="checkbox"/> Research & monitoring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation & management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife habitat acquisitions

Section 3. Relationships to other Bonneville projects

Umbrella / sub-proposal relationships. List umbrella project first.

Project #	Project title/description
9705900	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon
20116	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Horn Butte
20114	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Ladd Marsh WMA Additions
	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, McKenzie River Islands
	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, E.E. Wilson WMA Additions
	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Multnomah Channel
	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Ruthton Point (Mitchell Point)
	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Trout Creek Canyon
20115	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Irrigon WMA Additions
20113	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, South Fork Crooked River
	Juniper Canyon and Columbia Gorge Wildlife Mitigation Project

20140	Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Additions
9802200	Acquisition of Pine Creek Ranch
20090	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon, Logan Valley
20134	Acquire Oxbow Ranch - Middle Fork John Day

Other dependent or critically-related projects

Project #	Project title/description	Nature of relationship
9705900	Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon	Umbrella project; explains intent for mitigation planning, coordination, and implementation by Oregon wildlife managers within Oregon. Identifies priority projects with specific budgets that will help meet mitigation objectives.
	ODFW Grande Ronde Subbasin Umbrella Proposal	Umbrella project; explains management intent for anadromous and resident fish and wildlife in the Grande Ronde River Subbasin.
9565	Assessing Oregon Trust Agreement Using GAP Analysis	A mitigation planning tool used to analyze and rank potential mitigation projects within the basin.
9284	Oregon Trust Agreement Planning Project	A mitigation planning tool that includes methods for assembling a trust agreement and a list of potential mitigation projects.
9206800	Implementation of Willamette Basin Mitigation Program - Wildlife	A mitigation proposal focusing on land acquisition/easement, enhancement, and management of lands in the Willamette Basin. Similar in function as Coalition's umbrella project.

Section 4. Objectives, tasks and schedules

Past accomplishments

Year	Accomplishment	Met biological objectives?
1993	Created a list of potential wildlife mitigation projects throughout Oregon	
1997	Compiled more comprehensive prioritized list of mitigation sites; identified Wenaha WMA area as priority area	
1998	FY99 proposal for \$100,000 to acquire or ease lands adjacent to the Wenaha WMA	

	area was approved and recommended	
1998	Began landowner negotiations for land acquisition and/or conservation easement at Wenaha WMA	
1998	Developed partnerships with BLM, Clearwater Land Exchange, Trust for Public Lands, and The Nature Conservancy to help facilitate project objectives	

Objectives and tasks

Obj 1,2,3	Objective	Task a,b,c	Task
1	Assess Habitat Conditions/ Develop Management Plans	a	Assess existing habitat conditions and restoration needs and opportunities on 2,000 acres of acquired or eased lands adjacent to the Wenaha WMA
		b	Develop Restoration Plan
		c	Develop Operations and Maintenance Plan
		d	Develop Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
2	Restore Habitat Values - Implement Restoration Plan	a	Alter existing land use practices
		b	Implement noxious weed control
		c	Plant native grasses and shrubs
		d	Secure public access
3	Maintain Habitat Values - Implement Operations and Maintenance Plan	a	Maintain habitat values
		b	Maintain fences and gates
		c	Maintain informational signs
4	Measure Effectiveness of Restoration Plan - Implement Monitoring and Evaluation Plan	a	Evaluate changes in habitat conditions using HEP survey methods, plant survey methods, and photo points
		b	Compare noxious weed infestation levels to pre-control survey
		c	Conduct biological monitoring to assess species response
5	Acquire and/or Ease Additional Lands Adjacent to the Wenaha WMA	a	Acquire or ease 2,000-acres

Objective schedules and costs

Obj #	Start date mm/yyyy	End date mm/yyyy	Measureable biological objective(s)	Milestone	FY2000 Cost %
1	8/1999	12/2000	Assessment of existing conditions; development of Restoration Plan, O&M Plan, and M&E Plan		20.00%
2	10/1999	1/2003	Restore wildlife habitats; Provide enhancement credit HUs		10.00%
3	10/1999	12/2004	Maintain protection and enhancement credit HUs		5.00%
4	10/1999	12/2004	Habitat/Biological monitoring		5.00%
5	6/1999	12/2000	Develop conservation easement agreement on property	x	60.00%
				Total	100.00%

Schedule constraints

Difficult landowner negotiation efforts and inadequate or untimely fund acquisition could delay project implementation. Severe weather conditions could delay field activities.

Completion date

Development of plans - FY2000

Habitat restoration - FY2003

O&M and M&E - ongoing, the NPPC's FWP requires BPA to provide adequate O&M funding to sustain the project as long as the hydrosystem operates (NPPC 1994, Measure 11.2C.1)

Acquisition - FY2000

Section 5. Budget

FY99 project budget (BPA obligated): \$1,000,000

FY2000 budget by line item

Item	Note	% of total	FY2000
Personnel	for 0.25 FTE	% 8	11,598
Fringe benefits	@ 38%	% 3	4,407
Supplies, materials, non-	fence, weed control, sign, and other	% 4	5,000

expendable property	materials		
Operations & maintenance	included in personnel line item	%0	
Capital acquisitions or improvements (e.g. land, buildings, major equip.)	acquisition or conservation easement of additional land	%70	100,000
NEPA costs	for acquired or eased property	%4	5,000
Construction-related support		%0	
PIT tags	# of tags:	%0	
Travel		%2	3,000
Indirect costs	@35.5%	%7	10,297
Subcontractor	Wallow Co. Weed Control (O&M)	%2	3,000
Other	M&E costs included incorporated into personnel costs line item	%0	
TOTAL BPA FY2000 BUDGET REQUEST			\$142,302

Cost sharing

Organization	Item or service provided	% total project cost (incl. BPA)	Amount (\$)
Others undetermined at this time	Opportunities will be investigated during restoration plan development	%0	
		%0	
		%0	
		%0	
Total project cost (including BPA portion)			\$142,302

Outyear costs

	FY2001	FY02	FY03	FY04
Total budget	\$65,000	\$55,000	\$45,000	\$40,000

Section 6. References

Watershed?	Reference
<input type="checkbox"/>	Beak Consultants, Inc. 1993. Audit of wildlife loss assessments for federal dams on the Columbia River and its tributaries. Prepared for the NPPC, Portland, OR.
<input type="checkbox"/>	BPA. 1993. OR Trust Agreement Planning Project: Potential mitigation to the impacts on OR wildlife resources associated with relevant mainstem Col. R. and Willamette R. hydroelectric projects. BPA, U.S. Dept. of Energy, Portland, OR. DOE/BP-299-1. 53pp.

<input type="checkbox"/>	BPA. 1997a. Watershed management program final environmental impact statement. DOE/EIS - 0265. BPA, Portland, OR.
<input type="checkbox"/>	BPA. 1997b. Wildlife mitigation program final environmental impact statement. DOE/EIS - 0246. BPA, Portland, OR.
<input type="checkbox"/>	BPA. 1997c. Wildlife mitigation program record of decision. DOE/EIS - 0246. BPA, Portland, OR.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Northwest Power Act. 1980. Pacific Northwest electric power planning and conservation act, with index. BPA, U.S. Dept. of Energy. 40 pp.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Northwest Power Planning Council. 1994. Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Program. NPPC 94-55. NPPC, Portland, OR. January 1994.
<input type="checkbox"/>	ODFW 1997. Assessing OTAP Project Using GAP Analysis. In fulfillment of Project Number 95-65, Contract Number DE-BI179-92BP90299. Prepared for: BPA; Project Cooperators: USFWS, CTUIR, CTWSRO, BPT, Oregon Natural Heritage Program, Portland, OR.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prose. B., Farmer A., and Olson R. 1986. Cost-effectiveness of easement and fee title acquisition for mitigating wildlife habitat losses. USDI, USFWS, Nat. Ecol. Center, Fort Collins, CO. 61 pp.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rasmussen, L. and P. Wright. 1990a. Wildlife impact assessment, Bonneville Project, Oregon and Washington. Prepared by USFWS for U.S. Dept. of Energy, BPA, Portland, OR. 37pp.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rasmussen, L. and P. Wright. 1990b. Wildlife impact assessment, McNary Project, Oregon and Washington. Prepared by USFWS for U.S. Dept. of Energy, BPA, Portland, OR. 46pp.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rasmussen, L. and P. Wright. 1990c. Wildlife impact assessment, John Day Project, Oregon and Washington. Prepared by USFWS for U.S. Dept. of Energy, BPA, Portland, OR. 47pp.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rasmussen, L. and P. Wright. 1990d. Wildlife impact assessment, The Dalles Project, Oregon and Washington. Prepared by USFWS for U.S. Dept. of Energy, BPA, Portland, OR. 34pp.

PART II - NARRATIVE

Section 7. Abstract

This project, one of many proposed by the Oregon Wildlife Coalition, is considered an ongoing acquisition and enhancement project under the *Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon* project (Umbrella Project 9705900) as it was recommended for FY1999 funding. This proposal explains the management objectives for wildlife and wildlife habitat as they relate to the proposed project and describes the link between this project and others proposed under the Coalition's umbrella project.

The Oregon Wildlife Coalition is proposing to permanently protect and enhance approximately 4,000 acres of grassland, riparian/riverine, open forest, and rocky shrub-steppe habitats adjacent to ODFW's Wenaha Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in

northeast Oregon. The project, which is near the town of Troy on the Grande Ronde River, will involve acquisition and conservation easement of private lands. Two private parcels have been identified for possible acquisition and conservation easement. A proposal to acquire or ease one of these two private parcels was submitted in 1998 for FY99 BPA funds. The Council approved the proposal in September 1998.

In this FY2000 proposal, the Oregon Wildlife Coalition is requesting funds to: 1) to either purchase the title to a 2,000-property or to purchase a conservation easement on about 2,000 acres of a 4,000-acre tract (i.e., which ever transaction was not completed with FY99 funds will be completed with FY2000 funds), and 2) conduct habitat assessments; develop management plans; and begin implementing restoration, operation and maintenance, and monitoring and evaluation activities on both parcels.

The overall goal of this project is to restore and protect wildlife and fish habitat values associated with grassland, riparian/riverine, open forest, and rocky habitats along the mainstem Grande Ronde River and several of its tributaries through the protection and enhancement of habitats on acquired and eased lands adjacent to the Wenaha WMA. Habitat protection and enhancement will be achieved by developing and implementing restoration activities. Proposed restoration activities include alteration of existing agricultural and grazing practices which are currently degrading the site, control of noxious weeds, and planting of native grasses and forbs. Both upland and riparian habitat conditions will improve by changing agricultural and grazing practices; water quality in the Grande Ronde and its tributaries will also improve. Control of noxious weeds and the planting of native vegetation will help restore habitats to a more natural and diverse state. Both parcels will be enhanced and managed in cooperation with the Wenaha WMA.

Key habitats and cover types provided by the area include riverine/riparian, shrub-steppe, native grasslands and shrubs, and coniferous forest habitats. This project will help achieve the wildlife mitigation goal of fully mitigating for wildlife losses caused by the construction and operation of the hydropower system in the Columbia River Basin as outlined in the NPPC's Wildlife Program (NPPC 1994, Section 11.1). Riverine/riparian, shrub-steppe, native grasslands and shrubs, and coniferous forest habitat types are high and medium priority habitat types in the Lower Snake Subregion (NPPC 1994, Table 11-2). This project will benefit a variety of wildlife species, including many of the target species associated with the lower four Columbia River hydroelectric projects (i.e., mallard, Canada goose, mink, western meadowlark, spotted sandpiper, yellow warbler, downy woodpecker, black-capped chickadee, and California quail). About 700 - 1,500 protection and enhancement Habitat Units (HUs) are expected from the mitigation site by the year 2004.

Results of project restoration and enhancement activities will be monitored and evaluated using Habitat Evaluation Procedures protocols for the above mentioned mitigation target species, as well as for plant communities determined at a later time to be indicative of habitat quality. Photo monitoring, as well as biological monitoring of certain wildlife species and plant communities, will occur to measure changes in habitat quality and corresponding species responses.

Section 8. Project description

a. Technical and/or scientific background

The development of the hydrosystem inundated wildlife habitats and affected many species of wildlife (NPPC 1994). The Northwest Power Act of 1980 established and charged the NPPC with the task of developing a comprehensive fish and wildlife program to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in the Columbia Basin (Northwest Power Act, Section 4(H)(1)(A); NPPC 1994, Section 2). The Northwest Power Act also authorized and obligated BPA to fund implementation of mitigation projects consistent with the NPPC's FWP mitigation goals and objectives.

Hydrosystem impacts were assessed in the mid-1980s. These impacts have been independently audited and verified (Beak 1993) and were amended into the NPPC's FWP as unannualized construction losses (NPPC 1994, Section 11.3A.1). Wildlife impact assessments (Rasmussen and Wright 1990a, 1990b, 1990c, 1990d) estimated the loss of HUs as a result of the construction of each of the lower four Columbia River hydroelectric projects. Riparian/riverine, shrub-steppe, wetland, island, and forest habitats were lost as a result of inundation.

In 1992, the Oregon Trust Agreement Planning (OTAP) Project was initiated by the Oregon Wildlife Coalition (OWC) to create a list of potential wildlife mitigation opportunities by priority and to attempt to determine the costs of mitigating for wildlife losses in Oregon. Using Council and OWC developed criteria, this project resulted in a prioritized list of 287 potential mitigation sites and cost estimates for general habitats within the mitigation area (BPA 1993). For more information on the OTAP Project see the Oregon Wildlife Coalition's *Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites – Oregon* umbrella project proposal (Project 9705900). The OTAP was later refined in 1995 using GAP Analysis techniques. The primary goal of the project was to prioritize and depict the contribution of each proposed mitigation site to target species and habitats as well as overall biodiversity in the state and/or eco-region within which it is found. From the results of this project (ODFW 1997), Oregon wildlife managers cooperatively identified and ranked a short list of higher priority sites, one of which was the Wenaha WMA area. For more information on the OWC's GAP Analysis project see the *Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites – Oregon* umbrella project proposal.

The Wenaha WMA area is a high priority site because it contains diverse habitats that are important to a variety of species including bighorn sheep, elk, deer, black bear, cougar, and bald eagle. A unique habitat component of two parcels of interest are the rocky "breaks" along the Grande Ronde River. The "breaks," which are open, rocky areas with bunchgrass and patches of deciduous trees, provide critical winter range for deer, elk, and bighorn sheep. It is some of the lowest elevation land in the area. The parcels of interest are also unique because of their size and location. The project would add about 4,000

acres to the adjacent Wenaha WMA. The Grande Ronde River is important spawning, rearing, and migrating habitat for fall Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.

One of the properties of interest is nestled between two pieces of the Wenaha WMA. The Grande Ronde River forms the southern edge of the property. This section of the river is designated as a Wildlife and Scenic River. A conservation easement is being pursued on about a 2,000-acre portion of the 4,000-acre tract. The easement would allow for the management of land from the Grande Ronde River's edge, upslope through the "breaks" to upland grassland areas about 0.5-1.0 mile from the river. Although the parcel is currently being farmed (alfalfa) and grazed, the habitat is in very good condition. There are few intrusions of noxious weeds (e.g., leafy spurge, yellowstar thistle). Minimal enhancement activity will be necessary here. Enhancement will entail fencing the conservation easement boundary to keep cattle out of the "breaks," altering grazing practices, and some noxious weed control. Native grasses and forbs will be planted where deemed necessary and cost effective.

The second parcel of interest is approximately 2,000 acres. It is also adjacent to the Wenaha WMA. Bear Creek, a perennial tributary of the Grande Ronde River, flows through the property. Title purchase is currently being pursued. Intensive restoration will be necessary here as it is heavily grazed and farmed (wheat). Restoration will entail the alteration of grazing practices and other agricultural activities that are presently degrading the site. Water quality, riparian habitat conditions, and streambed conditions have been impacted by livestock. Extensive control of exotic plant species will be necessary on this parcel. Native grasses and forbs will be planted where deemed necessary and cost effective. Installation and repair of boundary fencing will also occur.

This is a unique opportunity to acquire and enhance lands adjacent to an existing WMA. If this project was not funded, upland and riparian habitats on the properties of interest would continue to be degraded by existing agricultural and grazing practices. Noxious weeds would continue to spread, increasing the likelihood that they become uncontrollable. One or both of the properties could sell to someone who would further degrade wildlife habitats through farming, grazing, and/or logging. As habitat values decline from spread of noxious weeds and continued land management practices, wildlife and fish abundance will likely decline gradually over time. Management of the properties of interest and corresponding influence on wildlife and fish species and their habitats could negatively impact adjacent Wenaha WMA lands and associated management goals and objectives. Opportunities to purchase or ease private lands are rare and could be lost if this project was not funded. Also, land values will likely increase, making future options less economically feasible.

Implementation of the Wenaha WMA Additions project will help the Council meet their wildlife mitigation objectives and provide partial mitigation for losses associated with the construction of the lower four Columbia River hydroelectric facilities. The Wenaha WMA Additions project will protect and enhance grassland, riverine/riparian, shrub-steppe, open forest, and rocky habitats all of which are considered high or medium priority habitat types (NPPC 1994, Table 11-2). The project will provide protection and

enhancement HUs for downy woodpecker, western meadowlark, California quail, great blue heron, yellow warbler, black-capped chickadee, mallard, and mink – most of the John Day and McNary hydroelectric facility mitigation target species.

b. Rationale and significance to Regional Programs

The Wenaha WMA Additions project is consistent with the NPPC's FWP goal to achieve and sustain levels of habitat and species productivity as a means for fully mitigating wildlife losses caused by construction and operation of the federal and non-federal hydroelectric system (NPPC 1994, Section 11.1). The project is also consistent with the specific principles outlined in Section 11.2D.1 of the FWP:

Least costly way to achieve the biological objective

The Horn Butte project will permanently provide benefits to wildlife primarily through land acquisition and conservation of easement of private land. According to a study that compared various mitigation methods, fee title acquisition and subsequent management is generally more cost effective than easement (Prose et al. 1986). The Oregon Trust Agreement Planning (OTAP) Project (BPA 1993) concurred with this finding.

Have measurable objectives

Wildlife and wildlife habitat will benefit from the Wenaha project. Benefits will be quantified as Habitat Units (HUs), the unit of measure used in Habitat Evaluation Procedures. The project is expected to generate 700 to 1,500 protection and enhancement HUs by the year 2004. Species response will also be measured using various biological monitoring protocols.

Provide riparian or other habitat that can benefit both fish and wildlife

This project will result in the removal of cattle from the "breaks" area along the Grande Ronde River, alteration of grazing practices on other portions of acquired lands, control of noxious weeds, and the planting of native plant species. The efforts will improve upland and riparian habitat conditions by restoring native plant communities. The Grande Ronde River provides important spawning, rearing, and migrating habitat for fall Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout, all which are Federally listed species. Fish species will benefit from improved riparian habitat conditions and improved water quality.

Protect high quality native habitat and/or species of concern

The Wenaha project will protect and enhance relatively intact shrub-steppe, native grassland, and rocky habitats on one parcel of interest and will restore grassland, shrub-steppe, open forest, and rocky habitats that have been degraded by land use practices and extensive noxious weed infestations on another. Improved habitat conditions will be protected from future threats. Despite overall degraded habitat conditions, the area provides important habitat for many Federal and State listed species including: bald eagle (Federally Threatened), peregrine falcon (Federally Endangered), ferruginous hawk (State Sensitive, Critical), Swainson's hawk (State Sensitive, Vulnerable), fall Chinook

salmon (Federally Threatened), Steelhead (Federally Threatened), bull trout (Federally Proposed Threatened/Endangered, State Sensitive, Critical).

Mitigate losses in-place in-kind

The Wenaha project will mitigate for target species losses off-site if applied to one of the lower four Columbia River hydroelectric facilities (e.g., it is about 70 miles from the McNary hydroelectric facility) or on-site if applied to one of the Lower Snake River hydroelectric facilities (e.g., it is about 45 miles from the Lower Granite hydroelectric facility). Losses would be in-kind (restoration of grassland, shrub-steppe, riverine/riparian habitats, and open forest habitats).

Help protect or enhance natural ecosystems and species diversity over the long-term

Protection of shrub-steppe, grassland, open forest, rocky, and riverine/riparian habitats will occur at the Wenaha project site in-perpetuity through acquisition and conservation easement of private lands. The properties of interest have been degraded by past land use practices; proposed enhancement activities will help restore native habitat characteristics to the site. Lands will be protected from future habitat degradation threats and species diversity will be enhanced and protected over the long-term. Management of these lands as part of the Wenaha WMA will enhance the effectiveness of proposed restoration activities as well as management activities occurring on the existing WMA. Improved habitat conditions will enhance species diversity and help ensure the future viability of the many species that use these habitat types. In addition to the mitigation target species and the species of concern listed above, the Wenaha WMA Additions project will benefit other wildlife such as deer, elk, bighorn sheep, cougar, raptors, bear, waterfowl, reptiles, and amphibians.

Complement the activities of the region's state and federal wildlife agencies and Indian tribes

Proposed mitigation activities will improve manageability of and complement wildlife management activities on the adjacent Wenaha WMA. The project is a unique opportunity to add onto the existing WMA and provide important habitat corridors to the adjacent WMA, Umatilla National Forest, Wenaha -Tucannon Wilderness, and Grande Ronde Wild and Scenic River area.

Encourage formation of partnerships to reduce project costs/eliminate duplicative activities

Some habitat improvement work has been conducted on and near the lands of interest through cooperation with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National Wild Turkey Foundation, North American Quail Association, and others. Together, these organizations and other individuals have previously donated about \$31,000 for acquisition and enhancement of lands adjacent to the Wenaha WMA. Similar partnerships will be pursued for this project. The Trust for Public Land is currently conducting landowner negotiations. Many partnering opportunities are possible and will be used to the greatest extent on these lands in the future. ODFW staff and equipment will likely be used to reduce project costs. Personnel at one-eighth time will be devoted

to this mitigation project; the majority of this personnel cost will be funded by other ODFW programs. Thus, personnel project costs will be shared with ODFW.

Do not impose on Bonneville the funding responsibilities of others

Under Section 4h of the Northwest Power Act, BPA is responsible for funding mitigation for the loss of wildlife habitat caused by development of the Columbia Basin hydrosystem. BPA accomplishes this mitigation by funding projects consistent with the Council's FWP. Certain enhancement, operation, and maintenance activities are reasonable for BPA to fund while other activities may be outside BPA's obligation. *CBFWA's Guidelines for Enhancement, Operation, and Maintenance Activities for Wildlife Mitigation Projects* (CBFWA 1998) explains what activities are within BPA's funding responsibility. The acquisition/easement, enhancement, operations and maintenance, and monitoring and evaluation components of the Wenaha WMA Additions project are consistent with CBFWA's guidelines and do not impose on BPA the funding responsibilities of others.

Address concerns over additions to public land ownership and impacts on local communities/consistency with local governments' comprehensive plans

Efforts to gain local and regional support for the Wenaha project are being made. In-lieu taxes on acquired land will be paid by ODFW while the private landowner will continue to pay taxes on the parcel with the conservation easement. Some land trade component may be pursued to address concerns over additions to public ownership. Management plans will be developed in concert with the BLM to ensure consistency. Proposed mitigation activities are consistent with existing ODFW Wenaha WMA management plans.

Use publicly owned land for mitigation or management agreements on private lands in preference to acquisition of private lands providing permanent protection or enhancement of wildlife habitat in the most cost-effective manner

The Wenaha project will involve both the acquisition and easement of private lands. The project will provide permanent protection and enhancement and will be managed for wildlife in conjunction with existing Wenaha WMA lands in a cost-effective manner.

Other

The Wenaha WMA Additions project is consistent with all known local, state, federal, and tribal laws. The project is covered under the BPA Wildlife and Watershed Programmatic EIS documents (BPA 1997b, BPA 1997c, BPA 1997a). The project is consistent with several other areas of the Council's FWP. Specifically, it is consistent with Section 7.6 of the FWP which calls for watershed based habitat restoration focusing on protecting of wild and natural populations.

c. Relationships to other projects

Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites – Oregon

This umbrella project proposal describes wildlife mitigation planning and implementation strategies for Oregon. It includes a list of specific mitigation projects that have been

identified by the Oregon Wildlife Coalition as high priority sites. While all the individual projects are stand-alone projects, they collectively relate to one another in that their aim is to achieve full mitigation for documented wildlife losses in Oregon. The umbrella proposal and the specific sites within the umbrella, including the Wenaha WMA Additions project, are sponsored by the Oregon Wildlife Coalition. Implementation of the umbrella will give the Coalition the flexibility to fund specific projects as they become available.

ODFW Grande Ronde Subbasin Umbrella

This umbrella explains the management intent for anadromous fish, resident fish, and wildlife in the Grande Ronde Subbasin. Management objectives for key species and strategies and actions that will be implemented to meet those objectives are described. This umbrella provides the link between fish and wildlife mitigation goals and objectives at the subbasin level. The Wenaha WMA Additions project falls within the geographic area of the Grande Ronde subbasin umbrella proposal.

Assessing Oregon Trust Agreement Planning Project Using GAP Analysis

The purpose of this project was to develop strategies for implementing wildlife mitigation in Oregon. The results of the Oregon Trust Agreement Planning Project were re-evaluated using refined criteria. Potential mitigation sites were prioritized and the contribution of each site to target species and priority habitats was assessed. The Wenaha WMA area was identified as a high priority mitigation site. The results of the GAP Analysis project will continue to be used to identify, plan, and eventually implement priority projects throughout Oregon for the purpose of wildlife mitigation.

Oregon Trust Agreement Planning Project

Oregon's wildlife managers and tribes initiated this project as the means of achieving a trust agreement between Oregon and BPA for wildlife mitigation. A database containing information about potential mitigation sites and associated mitigation costs was compiled. This project lays the foundation for the GAP Analysis project.

Implementation of Willamette Basin Mitigation Program – Wildlife

The goal of this project is to cooperatively develop and implement measures to mitigate for wildlife habitat losses associated with the hydrosystem in the Willamette River basin. Specific mitigation activities (e.g., mitigation planning, land acquisition) have been implemented within this project for several years. The project functions similarly to the *Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites – Oregon* umbrella in that the planning, proposal, and implementation of specific mitigation activities is done in a coordinated manner under the project title.

d. Project history (for ongoing projects)

The Wenaha WMA Additions project is an on-going project since FY99. Many important events led up to the Oregon Wildlife Coalition's proposal of the Wenaha project.

During the mid-1980s, at the Council's direction, BPA funded studies to assess the wildlife losses attributable to the construction of and inundation by each major hydroelectric facility. The Council reviewed these assessments and amended its FWP to specify the number of Habitat Units that would constitute adequate mitigation for wildlife losses at each dam. BPA was authorized to proceed with mitigation projects.

Over the next ten years, the project proposal and implementation process evolved. One important component of this process was the joining of Oregon's wildlife manager's (i.e., the Oregon Wildlife Coalition). The Oregon Wildlife Coalition (the Coalition) formed with the intent of planning and implementing wildlife mitigation for the State of Oregon in a coordinated manner. For more details on the specific events that have occurred to date, refer to the Oregon Wildlife Coalition's *Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon umbrella proposal* (Umbrella Project 9705900).

One of the Coalition's first efforts to plan and implement wildlife mitigation in a coordinated manner was the initiation of the Oregon Trust Agreement Planning (OTAP) Project (BPA 1993). This was Oregon's pre-mitigation planning effort to assess and prioritize mitigation needs and opportunities in the state. A couple of years after completing this project it became evident that more mitigation planning was needed. The Coalition began to develop strategies to implement wildlife mitigation in Oregon. This involved initiating a project to reassess and build upon the findings of the OTAP Project. This project, *Assessing OTAP Process Using GAP Analysis* (ODFW 1997) provided information on potential mitigation and estimated their contribution to the mitigation of target species and priority habitats.

Both the Oregon Trust Agreement Planning Project and the Assessing OTAP Process Using GAP Analysis project identified the Wenaha WMA area as a locale with priority wildlife mitigation needs and opportunities. For more information on these two Oregon wildlife mitigation planning efforts, refer to the Oregon Wildlife Coalition's *Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon umbrella proposal*.

Recognizing the benefits of addressing Oregon's mitigation needs and opportunities in a coordinated manner, the Oregon Wildlife Coalition developed and submitted a coordination and planning budget proposal in 1996 for FY97 BPA funds. This project was initiated in the fall of 1997. For the FY98 project proposal process, the Coalition proposed to identify a small group of potential mitigation projects throughout the state. This proposal had a small planning and coordination budget component. In 1997, the Oregon Wildlife Coalition further investigated potential mitigation sites and developed a short-list of priority sites. In 1998 for FY99 BPA funds, the Coalition submitted a more detailed *Securing Wildlife Mitigation Sites - Oregon umbrella proposal* that listed individual projects that would meet wildlife mitigation goals and objectives. The Wenaha WMA Additions project was one of these individual projects requesting FY99 BPA funds.

In the FY99 proposal, two parcels of private land were identified in the Wenaha WMA area as potential mitigation sites. As the proposal outlined, one private property would

likely be acquired while a conservation easement would be pursued on the another due to landowner preference. A land swap may be involved to facilitate the acquisition of land. A budget of \$100,000 was associated with the proposed acquisition and/or easement of private land. This project was approved for funding by the Council in September 1998. Efforts to implement this first approved phase of the Wenaha project began in 1998. During 1998, partnerships have developed that will help facilitate implementation of the project. The Trust for Public Land is taking the lead in negotiating with the private landowners. Clearwater Land Exchange may also be involved at some level to help facilitate land acquisition and/or conservation easement.

e. Proposal objectives

Objective 1: Assess Habitat Conditions/Develop Management Plans

Tasks - Assess existing habitat conditions of Wenaha WMA project area; Identify restoration needs and opportunities; Develop Restoration Plan, Operation and Maintenance Plan, and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Objective 2: Restore Habitat Values - Implement Restoration Plan

Tasks - Alter land use practices; Implement noxious weed control; Plant native grasses and shrubs; Secure public access

Objective 3: Maintain Habitat Values - Implement Operations and Maintenance Plan

Tasks - Maintain restored habitat conditions; Maintain fences and gates; Maintain informational signs

Objectives 4: Measure Effectiveness of Restoration Plan - Implement Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Tasks - Evaluate overall habitat conditions using HEP survey methods, plant survey methods, and photo points; Compare noxious weed infestation levels to pre-control survey; Conduct biological monitoring to assess species response to enhancement

Objectives 5: Acquire Additional Lands Adjacent to Wenaha WMA

Tasks – Acquire or ease 2,000 acres

f. Methods

Objective 1: Assess Habitat Conditions/Develop Management Plans

Task a - Assess existing habitat conditions on the Horn Butte project area; identify restoration needs and opportunities

Methods:

- Conduct Habitat Evaluation Procedures to estimate existing wildlife values and to estimate future changes in wildlife values and benefits resulting from enhancement actions.
- Conduct surveys (i.e., T&E species, toxics, cultural) to fulfill NEPA requirements.
- Based on HEP and other survey results, identify restoration needs and opportunities.
- Coordinate with other Wenaha WMA activities and plans.

Task b - Develop Restoration Plan

Methods:

- Develop mitigation goals and objectives that address the findings of Objective 1, Task a.
- Develop management strategies to achieve mitigation goals and objectives for the Wenaha site (e.g., land use practices, noxious weeds, native vegetation, public access).
- Refine timelines and budgets for Restoration Plan strategy implementation.
- Coordinate with other Wenaha WMA plans.

Task c - Develop Operations and Maintenance Plan

Methods:

- Identify management activities needed to maintain enhance habitat values through time.
- Develop O&M protocol (timeline and budget).

Task d - Develop Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Methods:

- Identify needs and opportunities for monitoring and evaluation.
- Identify variables to be monitored and evaluated.
- Review available M&E methodologies (e.g., HEP, species surveys, plant community surveys) and select techniques that will best meet objectives. Select photo point sites.
- Select and define success criteria.
- Develop M&E protocol (timeline and budget).

Objective 2: Restore Habitat Values – Implement Restoration Plan

Task a - Alter land use practices

Methods:

- Implement initial strategy for altering agricultural and livestock grazing practices. Strategies will be based on the assessment of existing habitat conditions, restoration needs and opportunities, estimated changes in wildlife habitat values from the

implementation of enhancement activities, and mitigation goals and objectives.

- Coordinate livestock strategy with adjacent landowners.
- Construct fence as necessary to facilitate grazing regime. This will likely involve construction of about 10 miles of fence in conjunction with the project area.

Task b - Implement noxious weed control

Methods:

- Implement initial weed control strategy for project site. Strategy will be based on the assessment of existing habitat conditions, restoration needs and opportunities, estimated changes in wildlife habitat values from the implementation of enhancement activities, and mitigation goals and objectives.
- Obtain necessary equipment and herbicides to accomplish weed control. This will involve investigating options for borrowing/renting equipment. Needed equipment will likely include backpacks, All Terrain Vehicles, and tractor-mounted spray units.
- Apply herbicides. Applications may be made 2-3 times per growing season depending on the target species' life cycles, growth tendencies, and success of initial application.
- Consult and coordinate with Wallowa County Weed Control.

Task c - Plant native grasses and shrubs

Methods:

- Implement initial native vegetation planting strategy for project site. Strategy will be based on the assessment of existing habitat conditions, restoration needs and opportunities, estimated changes in wildlife habitat values from the implementation of enhancement activities, and mitigation goals and objectives.
- Obtain planting stock. This will likely involve collecting planting stock and/or seeds from the site or a similar site, and propagation of stock and seeds.
- Obtain necessary equipment to accomplish seeding and planting. This will involve investigating options for borrowing/renting equipment. Grasses are seeded with a harrow or broadcast seeded. Shrubs are planted as cuttings or bare-root stock.
- Seed and plant native species in areas identified in planting strategy.

Task d - Secure public access

Methods:

- Implement initial public access strategy. Strategy will be based on public access issues on and adjacent to the project site that were identified.

- Coordinate with adjacent landowners to ensure access to site is secured. This may involve the development of an access agreement between ODFW and the adjacent landowners.

Objective 3: Maintain Habitat Values - Implement Operations and Maintenance Plan

Task a – Conduct habitat enhancement activities as necessary

Methods:

- Implement management activities needed to maintain habitat values through time. Needed activities will be based on the assessment of existing habitat conditions, restoration needs and opportunities, estimated changes in wildlife habitat values from the implementation of enhancement activities, and mitigation goals and objectives. Activities necessary to maintain habitat values may include noxious weed control, prescribed burning, use of livestock and agriculture as management tools, and native vegetation planting and seeding.

Task b - Maintain fences and gates

Methods:

- Repair fences and gates to protect project site from livestock trespass and to regulate visitor access. Maintenance will likely include repairing support structures, splicing wires, tightening wires, and replacing stays. About one mile of fence will likely need maintenance each year.
- Report any trespass violations to County law enforcement.

Task c - Maintain informational signs

Methods:

- Maintain informational signs through repair, painting, and replacement. This will involve updating the information as necessary through the life of the project.

Objectives 4: Measure Effectiveness of Restoration Plan - Implement Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Task a - Evaluate changes in habitat conditions

Methods:

- Take regular photographs at photo points to visually document changes in habitat conditions through time.
- Conduct Habitat Evaluation Procedures to gather data on wildlife habitat values. Target species used in the existing conditions assessment will be used.

- Compare before and after Restoration Plan implementation HEP data. Success criteria will be applied to help assess the effectiveness of the enhancement activities.
- Calculate Habitat Units gained.
- Identify shortcomings if any and re-evaluate the Restoration Plan (i.e., apply adaptive management principles). Specific strategies to achieve mitigation goals and objectives may be adjusted during this process.

Task b - Compare noxious weed infestation levels to pre-control survey

Methods:

- Evaluate changes in noxious weed infestations.
- Identify shortcomings if any and re-evaluate the weed control component of the Restoration Plan (i.e., apply adaptive management principles). Specific weed control strategies may be adjusted during this process.
- Coordinate with Wallowa County Weed Control.

Task c - Conduct biological monitoring to assess species response to enhancement

Methods:

- Implement selected biological monitoring techniques to complement standard HEP habitat monitoring. Techniques will likely include assessment of plant communities (a modified HEP technique) and the monitoring individual species responses (e.g., neo-tropical bird surveys, aerial deer counts).
- Analyze data to assess species response to enhancement activities.
- Identify inadequate species responses and possible causes for such occurrences.
- Re-evaluate the Restoration Plan and species response variables (i.e., apply adaptive management principles).

Objectives 5: Acquire Additional Land Adjacent to the Ladd Marsh WMA

Task a – Acquire or ease 2,000 acres

Methods:

- Coordinate with the entity that will facilitate landowner negotiations.
- Conduct property appraisal and NEPA surveys.
- Oversee acquisition or easement of property.
- Complete necessary steps with ODFW Realty Division staff for title transfer to ODFW.

g. Facilities and equipment

No new facilities are anticipated to be necessary at this time. Existing facilities of the project implementers and cooperators will be used to minimize costs and to increase efficiency. ODFW equipment associated with the Wenaha WMA and District offices

will be used. ODFW has sufficient office and storage space, secretarial services, equipment, and computers to carry out this project's proposed tasks.

h. Budget

This proposal contains a budget that is higher than that projected in the FY99 proposal (total costs were estimated at \$100,000 for FY2000). Costs for acquisition or easement of the second property of interest were slightly underestimated. Personnel, NEPA, and indirect costs were not considered in the FY99 proposal budget. The FY2000 proposal budget focuses on acquisition or easement of the second parcel originally identified. Personnel costs, which cover staff time for management plan development and implementation of initial restoration, O&M, and M&E activities, are included in the FY2000 budget.

Personnel:

This proposal includes a new line item for personnel. Staff time is needed to develop and implement management plans and to acquire/ease additional lands. It is assumed that existing ODFW staff will be partially funded to facilitate project planning and implementation. Personnel will facilitate the assessment of existing habitat conditions, development of the management plans, implementation of restoration activities, implementation of the O&M Plan, and implementation of the M&E Plan. Three quarters of staff time will be funded by other ODFW programs.

Services, Supplies, Materials, Non-Expendable Property

Included in this line item are fence materials, herbicides, signs, office supplies (pens, paper, etc.), printing costs, communications (cellular phone), film, and film development.

Capital acquisitions or improvements

Fund to pay for land acquisition or easement are requested

NEPA

Costs to meet NEPA requirements are based on proposed mitigation activities and scope of work'

Travel

Travel expenses include mileage, per dium, and limited travel to Portland to coordinate project management with the Oregon Wildlife Coalition and BPA. Vehicle rental expenses are not incorporated into this line item because it is assumed that existing agency vehicles will be used.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are assumed at a rate of 35.5% (ODFW's negotiated state/federal contract overhead rate).

Subcontractor

Contracting includes noxious weed control and native plant collection and propagation.

Section 9. Key personnel

Vic Coggins

Current Employer: ODFW

Title: District Wildlife Biologist, Wallowa District

Current Responsibilities: Responsible for the management of all wildlife species within the District. Specific duties include gathering wildlife inventory data and implementation of habitat restoration projects.

Education: B.S. Wildlife Management, Oregon State Univ. 1967

Experience: 32 years with ODFW, 20 years as District Wildlife Biologist

Areas of Expertise: Bighorn sheep; habitat restoration and management programs

Relevant Publications/Accomplishments: Numerous publications on bighorn sheep, mountain goats, Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer; facilitated acquisition of over 800 acres to add to Wenaha WMA and development of associated management plans

Anticipated Wenaha WMA Additions Project Duties: Help facilitate project implementation

Dave Harcombe

Current Employer: ODFW

Title: Northeast Oregon Wildlife Habitat Program Manager

Current Responsibilities: Responsible for the management and maintenance of Bridge Creek WMA, Wenaha WMA, Willow WMA, Irrigon WMA, and Power City WMA.

Education: B.S. Wildlife Management Oregon State Univ. 1965

Experience: 18 years with ODFW

Previous Employment: 13 years in the private plant nursery business

Areas of Expertise: restoration of upland habitats; waterfowl, deer, elk

Relevant Job Accomplishments: Facilitated addition of 70 acres to Wenaha WMA; currently is implementing Russian olive control measures on WMA land

Anticipated Wenaha WMA Additions Project Duties: Project manager; facilitate project implementation.

Susan Barnes

Current Employer: ODFW

Title: Columbia Basin Wildlife Mitigation Coordinator

Current Responsibilities: Coordinates Oregon's BPA wildlife mitigation efforts; facilitates the Oregon Wildlife Coalition; ODFW representative in CBFWA Wildlife Caucus processes

Education: B.S. Wildlife Management/Forestry, Univ. of New Hampshire 1991

Certifications: certified in Habitat Evaluation Procedures (HEP)

Experience: 10 years wildlife experience

Areas of Expertise: Project development, coordination, and oversight; threatened and endangered species; NEPA

Previous Employment: Mason, Bruce & Girard, Inc. (environmental consulting firm); Self-employed environmental consultant (contractor with NPPC); Beak Consultants, Inc. (environmental consulting firm); U.S. Forest Service (Wildlife Biologist)
Anticipated Wenaha WMA Additions Project Duties: Indirectly oversee project implementation; coordinate project activities with other Columbia Basin mitigation projects.

Section 10. Information/technology transfer

Information transfer and exchange will be accomplished via telephone, email, and fax communication. Reports and plans will be distributed to all participating and interested entities via BPA and the Internet. HEP Evaluations, management plans, and monitoring and evaluation reports will be publicly available. Info will also be transferred through the CBFWA Wildlife Caucus forum as well as between participating agencies and organizations at occasional meetings. The media (e.g., newspapers, agency magazines) may be used to convey info to the public. Quarterly and annual reports will be prepared for BPA.

Congratulations!